

Fairfax County Department of Community and Recreation Services

Lorton Senior Center Participant Handbook

**IT'S NOT THE YEARS IN YOUR LIFE,
BUT THE LIFE IN YOUR YEARS THAT COUNT**

**Lorton Senior Center
7722 Gunston Plaza
Lorton, Virginia 22079
Phone: 703-550-7195, TTY 711
Fax: 703- 541-2092
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/rec**

Staff: Anne Miller, *Director* Brigitte Bombardier, *Asst. Director*

Operating Hours: Monday – Friday 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.



Fairfax County is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination in all county programs, services and activities and will provide reasonable accommodations upon request. To request special accommodations call 703-324-4386, TTY 703-222-9693. Please allow ten working days in advance of the event in order to make the necessary arrangements.



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WELCOME TO LORTON SENIOR CENTER

Welcome to Lorton Senior Center - your center for Fun and Friendship. Monday through Friday, we offer a variety of activities and opportunities for companionship and fulfillment. Our programs are geared towards the recreational, social, physical and intellectual needs of senior adults, 55 and above who are residents of Fairfax County. We are sponsored by the Fairfax County Department of Community and Recreation Services, Senior Services Division.

In 1990, a need for a community meeting and activity place for area seniors was met by opening a center three days a week. This service has grown over time as the needs of the community expanded. Lorton Senior Center moved several times over the years as space requirements changed, to its present location in two storefront spaces in the center of the Gunston Plaza shopping center.

The summer of 2003 saw the completion of a long-awaited expansion for the center, and provided much needed space to increase the activities and programs offered to the community. There is now space for a computer lab, billiards, line dancing, expanded exercise classes and more.

The participant's backgrounds are varied and help to provide interest and support for our programs. Visitors to the center include long time residents, as well as newcomers from out of state and other countries. Many have moved here to be near family in the area. Lorton Senior Center is a great place for mature adults to meet and make friends, learn new skills and stay connected with their community!

Welcome!

SENIOR SERVICE PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND POLICIES

Mission Statement of Senior Services

To provide residents of Fairfax County, 55 years of age and older, opportunities for recreation, life and leisure skill development and community involvement.

Purpose of the Senior Center

The Senior Center is community-based and serves as a focal point for senior adults by providing a continuum of services in a supportive environment and by linking participants, their families and the community at large to resources offered by other agencies. Services are prevention and intervention-oriented to meet the social, physical, emotional and intellectual needs of older adults. Senior Centers fulfill a unique need both by recognizing the diverse needs of the older adult and by understanding that seniors contribute lifelong experience, interests and skills in their communities.

Goals of Senior Services

To provide residents of Fairfax County, 55 years of age and older with:

- ❖ Opportunities for satisfaction-guaranteed recreation, participation, skill development, leisure enrichment and development of a personal leisure philosophy through a variety of specifically designed recreational activities.
- ❖ Health, wellness, fitness, nutritional, educational and outreach programs to maintain the social, physical, emotional and intellectual well-being of older adults.
- ❖ Life skill enhancement programs designed to support the dignity and independence of senior adults.

Eligibility Requirements

- ❖ Must be a Fairfax County resident
- ❖ Must be 55 years of age or older
- ❖ Must be able to take care of all personal needs
- ❖ Must be able to orient to person, time and place
- ❖ Must abide by the Code of Conduct
- ❖ Must complete and sign the Senior Center registration form

Code of Conduct

Participants are expected to behave appropriately. Inappropriate behavior is not permitted at Senior Centers. Inappropriate behaviors include but are not limited to:

- ❖ Physical or sexual assault, battery or improper touching.
- ❖ Loitering, smoking, gambling, solicitation or panhandling.
- ❖ Destruction or theft of equipment or supplies.
- ❖ Possession or consumption of alcohol beverages or exhibiting public intoxication.
- ❖ Harassment of any kind to other participants or staff members.
- ❖ Use of abusive, insulting, obscene or racially derogatory language.
- ❖ Inability to exhibit self-control and appropriate self-conduct.

A participant who violates this Code of Conduct will be asked to leave the center. When appropriate, a violator may be subject to the progressive disciplinary action outlined with Community and Recreation Policy No. 141 or possible arrest.

Registration

All participants must complete a Registration Form upon their first visit. There is no charge to join the center. All information is considered confidential. If a potential participant refuses to register with the center, he or she may not be eligible to participate in the center activities or programs.

Sign In

It is very important that you sign in when you come to the center. The sign-in sheet is located on the front desk. There are two good reasons why you must sign in: first, to help us track daily statistics requested by Fairfax County *and*, second, in case of an emergency, fire drill and evacuation, we need to know who is in the building.

Lorton Senior Center's Inclement Weather Policy

- ❖ If Fairfax County Public Schools are closed, Lorton Senior Center is closed.
- ❖ If Fairfax County Public Schools are delayed 1 or 2 hours, Lorton Senior Center opens at 10 a.m.; however there will be no lunch, no Fastran, and some activities may be cancelled.

- ❖ If Fairfax County Public Schools close early (early dismissal) Lorton Senior Center will close after lunch, and all afternoon activities will be cancelled.
- ❖ If you have any questions about the Fastran schedule, call Lorton Senior Center 703-550-7195, TTY 711.

Program Reminders

- ❖ All trips and social events, luncheons, and classes require a reservation several days in advance.
- ❖ All trips are from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. and have a \$1 bus fee unless otherwise noted. Lunch fees are additional.
- ❖ Program dates and times are subject to change; call the center for daily changes.

Lunches

The center is a nutrition site serving lunches at noon, Monday through Friday. We are funded under Title 111-C of the Older Americans Act through the Area Agency on Aging. The program is administered within guidelines and framework provided by the Virginia Department of Aging. Our lunches are delivered from one of Fairfax County's School sites. A Registered Dietician monitors the meals, so you can rest assured you are receiving a well-balanced and nutritious lunch.

Lunch Payment

For participants under 60, for guests or for those participants not registered for reduced-cost meals, the cost is \$5.00 per meal. Please give staff your lunch money.

Registered participants 60 years of age or older may request participation in reduced-price lunch. Eligibility is based on income. Staff will assist you in completing the required form. Lunch payment is confidential. Put your lunch donation in the container on the front desk.

How to Order Lunch

Menus are available at the senior center with a choice of a hot meal, hot vegetarian meal, a fruit plate, a chef salad or bag (sandwich) lunch. Lunches may be ordered in advance by signing up on the lunch sheet located on the front desk. If ordering the day of the lunch, please call by 8:15 a.m. You may place your order on the answering machine. Please speak clearly, spelling your name and stating your food order and beverage selection: Skim milk, 1% Milk, Chocolate Milk or Juice. Water is available in the lunchroom. If

you cannot make it a particular day, please cancel by notifying Lorton Senior Center staff no later than 8:15 a.m. that morning, or you will still be responsible for the cost of your lunch.

Transportation To The Center - FASTRAN

Transportation services provided by FASTRAN may be available if you live in Lorton's service area and are at least 60 years of age and are interested in a regularly schedule ride to and from the center. See staff for details. It takes approximately one week to process your application. FASTRAN pick-up times are between 9 a.m. and 10 a.m., and 2 p.m.- 3 p.m. for the ride home. Cost is .50 cents each way or \$1.00 per day. See the staff for more information about FASTRAN or other transportation services.

FASTRAN Cancellation

Once you have enrolled for FASTRAN service you will be expected to be ready when FASTRAN arrives. If you cannot make it a particular day or are going on vacation, please cancel by notifying Lorton Senior Center staff no later than 8:15 a.m. that morning, or you will be responsible for the cost of your ride.

“One-Time-Only Rides” may be available for those who already use FASTRAN. This allows you to attend on a particular day that is not normally scheduled. Please make your request to Lorton Senior Center staff at least five business days in advance.

Trips

All persons signing up for trips must have a current registration form on file. Please mark your calendar, since we do not call to remind you. We welcome your ideas and suggestions for trips and encourage feedback! When signing up we also ask you to please **CLEARLY PRINT** your name and phone number. In the event of any changes or cancellations, we can contact you.

We offer two types of trips: Trips of Necessity and Charter Trips. Trips of Necessity are weekly trips to an area where you may shop for food, clothing and any necessary items needed for the home. In addition, we are allotted 20 Charter Trips (or 100 hours) per year. These trips can be to a place of interest that is within an hours drive, and may be scheduled Monday through Friday between 10 a.m. and 2 .pm. or during the evening or weekend. The sign up sheet for these scheduled trips is located on the front desk. Space is limited, so we recommend signing up early.

Trip Payment

Payment for a FASTRAN ride and any other required tour fees are due at the time of sign up. The FASTRAN fee is \$1.00 round trip.

Trip Cancellations

If the trip is canceled you will receive a refund. If you must cancel the trip after the cut off date, you will receive a reimbursement for any tour fees or tickets **ONLY** if your slot is filled. FASTRAN fees are not refunded.

Departure, Return and the Emergency Information Card

The bus will leave **PROMPTLY** at the designated time. Please arrive 15 minutes prior to the scheduled departure. You will receive a slip of paper with the center phone number and the time and location for your return. It is advisable, especially in large shopping areas, to note some 'points of reference' for your location, such as, "Hallmark store at corner". It is your responsibility to return to the designated pick-up location, and be on time for the return trip. FASTRAN will not wait for you, since they must return the other participants on time.

Special Accommodations

If you require special accommodations, please let us know in advance (i.e. in need of a wheelchair bus.) Fairfax County is committed to nondiscrimination on the basis of disability in all county programs, services and activities. Reasonable accommodations will be provided upon request. In order to make the necessary arrangements, please allow a minimum of 10 working days in advance of event.

We ask you to follow our *Courtesy Rule*: Cancellations and no-shows affect everybody. Be courteous and let us know if you will not be able to make a trip you signed up for, by the earliest date possible. This allows us, if there is a wait list, to go to the next person on the list. Please note: If you are canceling, do not replace your name with someone else's; we honor the wait list first.

Special Programs and Classes

Socials, special luncheons, classes and other events are listed in the calendar and are posted on the front desk. Many special programs require a reservation in advance in order to procure supplies and arrange seating. Although many activities, programs and classes at the senior center are free, some have a registration fee and have limited space. Prior registration is needed.

When signing up, we also ask you to please CLEARLY PRINT your name and phone number, so in the event of changes or cancellations, we can contact you.

Starting New Groups and Room Scheduling

Participants who are interested in starting a new program or group activity must contact the Center Director. The Center Director will determine whether the proposed activity is appropriate to the interests of the center's participants and does not conflict an existing activity. Staff will assist you in scheduling, promotion, and equipment. Please provide us with the information at least three months before the scheduled event in order to allow time to list it in the center calendar.

Room Scheduling

The center has five rooms used for daily activities. Since space can become limited, we must respect the community space and be considerate of time limitations in the rooms. Some groups may need to be flexible and relocate on occasion. When requesting use of a room for a program or class, please provide the following information:

- ❖ Event description
- ❖ Date and times of event
- ❖ Number of people attending
- ❖ Special equipment needed (e.g. TV/VCR)

When using a room for a program, the group is responsible for the set up and cleanup of the room. Please leave the room as you found it.

Safety comes first at Lorton Senior Center. Chairs, tables and all other equipment must be set up and put away safely. Ask staff for assistance if needed. Please pay special attention to safety regarding extension cords and wires of any kind.

ADVISORY COUNCIL

The purpose of the Senior Center Advisory Council is to assist the County of Fairfax at each senior center in fulfilling social, educational and recreational needs of its senior citizens. The council is an integral part of the senior center and serves in an advisory capacity to the Senior Center Director. Council members provide input on all major issues, activities and programs offered at the center. Elections occur once a year in September. It is a great way to become involved!

FRIENDS OF FAIRFAX COUNTY SENIOR CENTERS, INC

The following is a note from the Executive Council of the Friends Of Fairfax County Senior Centers Inc.:

On behalf of the Fairfax County Senior Services, we are pleased to announce that the “Friends of Fairfax County Senior Centers, Inc.” has been granted 501-c-3 (non profit) status. This is exciting news! Non profit status will help us provide increased support to senior programs and services in the county. “Friends Of” was formed thanks to the time and hard work of many senior center members and elected members of the Executive Council. Now each participant has the opportunity to support their own senior center! Please direct all donations and purchases to an advisory council member and not to center staff. Your tax-deductible monetary contribution will be optimally utilized by each senior center. Money collected is strictly for use by the Senior Center Advisory Councils.

VOLUNTEERS

We would not be what we are today without our wonderful volunteers! If you have an interest or skill to share, we can find a job for you! Volunteers are the backbone of the center. In addition, we are always looking to partner with local schools, businesses and clubs in the neighborhood. Spread the word and please contact the Center Director.

DONATIONS

Donations may be accepted Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. Please speak with staff before you bring a donation in to find out whether it is needed and will be put to use at the center. Quite often, we are not in need of the item but can recommend another place in the community that is in greater need. A donation letter will be provided, if requested. We do not assign a monetary value to your donation.

LORTON SENIOR CENTER STAFF

Anne Miller, Center Director since 1998

“Working with people of all ages and helping them enjoy arts, music and recreation has been the mainstay of my career for many years. From the youngest to the oldest, I have enjoyed being able to share, encourage and facilitate new experiences. When we started a senior program in a neighboring municipality, where I worked previously, I decided then that I really wanted to focus on this special part of our population. When a position opened with Fairfax County Senior Services in 1995, I was fortunate to be selected to fill the job. I live in the Springfield area with my husband and we have three grown children. I enjoy boating, camping, music, reading a good book and many social occasions with family and friends. My favorite part of this job is sharing life stories!”

Brigitte Bombardier, Assistant Director since 1999

“I have worked for Fairfax County since 1983, most of those years as Center Supervisor for the School-Aged Child Care Program. Facilitating activities, programs and events and supporting families has been the heart of my career. What drew me to Senior Services? My grandmother! I saw first-hand how important an active recreation center is to the quality of one’s life. I had to be a part of it. I was lucky to find a place at Lorton Senior Center, a very homey, friendly, active, fun, caring and tight community...a family away from home. Outside of my job, I enjoy spending time with my husband, Dale, family, friends and my pets. The outdoors, especially by lakes, rivers, and beaches, has always been a main destination for me. I love to boat, bike, camp and search for something to photograph. I enjoy animals, pottery, photography, stained glass art and creating things out of driftwood.”